advice on handling this or that issue, but no official communications were submitted to us for publication and there was no censorship of what we printed. We defended the cause of freedom in Transcaucasia —and later in Georgia—with the arguments we considered proper and just. The newspaper was strongly anti-Communist but never anti-Russian.

Transcaucasia was engaged in peace negotiations with Turkey that had begun soon after the dissolution of the Russian Constituent Assembly. The Transcaucasian gevernment had hoped to settle the dispute with the Turks on the basis of *status quo ante bellum*, but after the Brest-Litovsk treaty and the Turkish ultimatum claiming Batum and two Armenian districts, negotiations were broken off and the Transcaucasian delegation returned to Tiflis. The government and Seym—the parliament formed after the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly—were split. The Tartars openly welcomed the advance of the Turks in areas with a mixed Moslem and Armenian population. On April 13, Seym addressed an appeal to the peoples of Transcaucasia, calling all men to arms. The Tartars abstained from voting.

The war started with heavy odds against the Georgians and Armenians. The Russian army, which had shielded the Caucasus against the Turks, was gone and had carried away or destroyed almost all munitions except what it had sold to the Turks. The military forces of Transcaucasia consisted of half a dozen Armenian battalions and a handful of Georgian volunteers. The forts of Batum fell after two days, and the main Armenian fortress, Kars, capitulated two weeks later.

Peace negotiations were resumed in Batum, now a Turkish city. The Transcaucasian delegation was ready to accept the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty and insisted only that negotiations be conducted with all the Central Powers, rather than with the Turks alone. But the Turkish delegates declared that the latest victories of their army had made the Brest-Litovsk agreement obsolete and demanded further "adjustments" of frontiers and control over Transcaucasian railroads. When a deadlock in negotiations developed, Germany offered to mediate. The Transcaucasian delegation accepted the offer, the Turks rejected it. Then the People's Commissars in Petrograd entered the arena, warning Germany against dealing with Transcaucasia and denouncing the Tiflis government.

Turkish troops were advancing along the Armenian railroad. In Batum, Transcaucasian Tartars sided openly with the Ottoman delegation. North Caucasus was in a state of open civil war. Moslems on the southern fringe of Georgia decided to join the Ottoman Empire. Influential groups among the Armenians were thinking of restoring ties with Russia. Under these conditions, Seym proclaimed the dissolution